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PARIS PROSECUTORS RAID X OFFICES OVER CHILD ABUSE IMAGES, DEEPFAKES

The search at the offices of Elon Musk's social media platform was part of a preliminary probe into a range of offences, including child porn

CHARGES INCLUDE DENIAL OF THE HOLOCAUST

The investigation was opened in January last year by the cybercrime unit. It is looking into alleged "complicity" in possession and spreading of pornographic images of minors, sexually explicit deepfakes, denial of the Holocaust—which is a crime in France—and manipulation of an automated data processing system as part of an organised group, among other charges

MUSK SUMMONED FOR 'INTERVIEW' ON APR 20

- In addition, the Paris prosecutors have sought "voluntary interviews" of Musk and Linda Yaccarino, former CEO of X, on April 20
- The investigation was first opened following reports by a French lawmaker alleging that biased algorithms on X were likely to have distorted the functioning of an automated data processing system

DENIED THE CHARGES AND TERMED THE INVESTIGATION 'POLITICALLY MOTIVATED'

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

BIG DEAL

Sensex soars 2,072 points, investors richer by ₹12 lakh cr

The equity markets gave a thumbs up to the US tariff cut with the Sensex zooming 2,072 points and the broader Nifty closing above 25,700 on Tuesday. Stock investors' wealth surged by ₹12.10 lakh crore following the sharp rally in equities in response to the positive news | **P15**

No word from India yet on halting oil purchases: Russia

Russia has not heard any statement from India about stopping Russia oil purchases, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. He added that Russia will continue to develop its relations with India. Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said that Kremlin is closely monitoring the situation

Karnataka govt moves resolution seeking repeal of VB-G RAM G

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka government on Tuesday moved a resolution in the Assembly to get the Union Government to repeal the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act and reinstate the UPA-era Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in its original form.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah moved the resolution amid stiff opposition from the Opposition members, who created a ruckus in the House.

Siddaramaiah, who tabled the resolution, stated that the House reiterated the idea of the Panchayati system and also the decentralisation of power.

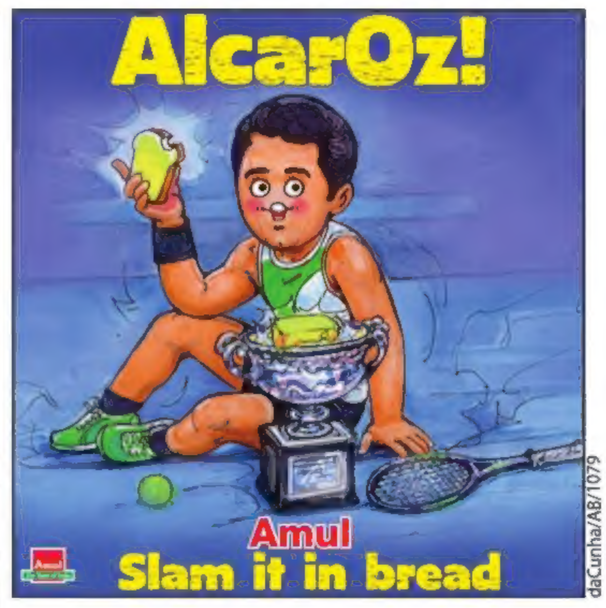
"MGNREGA was a lifeline of the poor, and the House takes serious note of revoking it. This action has been done unilaterally by the Central government, and this will put a clip on people's right," the resolution read.

The resolution further states that the new legislation infringes upon the rights to life and livelihood under Article 21 of the Constitution.

MORE ON P4

'Financial stress'

The CM said states will face financial stress due to VB-G RAM G, as the Centre-state share has been reworked to 60:40. In MGNREGA, the Centre-state ratio was 90:10, he added P4



Jt statement soon, not opening up agri, dairy to US: Goyal

PUSHPITA DEY @ New Delhi

INDIA's sensitive sectors, including agriculture and dairy, will remain protected under the trade deal with the US, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Tuesday.

"Interests of farmers have been safeguarded. There has been no compromise on sensitive sectors like dairy and agriculture," Goyal said, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has consistently paid attention to the welfare of stakeholders in these sectors.

Goyal's clarification came after US Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins claimed in a social media post that the new deal would allow exports of more American farm products to India's massive market, thus lifting prices and pumping cash into rural America.

A commerce ministry official said that no new items of agriculture will be allowed to be imported; the deal will include only some products that are currently allowed, such as dry fruits.

On Monday, Trump announced that the US tariff on Indian goods would be cut from 25% to 18%. He said Washington would also remove the additional 25% tariff imposed on New Delhi as a penalty for buying Russian oil.

Trump also said India has agreed to $500 billion worth of imports from the US. In a clarification, India's commerce ministry said the $500 billion imports would be spread over five years, primarily driven by imports for India's data centres and global capability centres. Thus, imports from US could touch $100 billion annually — up from $45.62 billion merchandise imports in 2024.

Goyal said the deal will open up huge opportunities for India's labour-intensive sectors. A joint statement is likely this week followed by a fact sheet. According to sources, as of now only the framework addressing the tariff challenges has been negotiated.

Quad gets lifeline, Trump may visit India this year

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

EVEN as the fine print of the India-US trade deal is awaited, key political and strategic doors appear to be opening from the revival of Quad momentum to the possibility of US President Donald Trump visiting India later this year.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio are set to hold talks in Washington, DC on Tuesday at 3.30 pm EST (around 2 am IST on Wednesday), amid heightened anticipation over the India–US trade deal.

At the heart of the announcement is Trump's claim that India's "reciprocal tariff" rate would be reduced from 25% to 18% under the deal. White House sources have also indicated that the additional 25% duty imposed on India in August for purchasing Russian oil would be eliminated.

However, as of now, there is no executive order, legally required for tariff changes to take effect.

New Delhi, for its part, has remained cautious. There has been no formal response to Trump's assertion that India has stopped buying Russian oil, and officials are waiting for the Office of the US Trade Representative to share the detailed contours of the agreement.

The proposed 18% headline tariff places India in a relatively favourable position compared to competitors Vietnam, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and China. But experts say the real impact will depend on the fine print.

"Purchase of oil is largely left to the companies and many of them are in the private sector. They will purchase oil which is most cost-competitive," said ex-foreign secretary and Rajya Sabha MP Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

BAD BRUSH

Wingtips of Air India and IndiGo planes that brushed each other at the Mumbai airport on Tuesday. Both aircraft suffered damages (inset) and were grounded | SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

LS suspends eight 'unruly' Opposition MPs

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

WITH the face-off between the government and the Opposition sharpened over blocking Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi from speaking in the Lok Sabha on the Sino-Indian border issue, seven Congress members and one CPI-M MP were suspended on Tuesday for 'throwing papers' at the Chair.

The suspended members are Gurjeet Singh Aujla, Hibi Eden, C Kiran Kumar Reddy, Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, Manickam Tagore, Prashant Padole and Dean Kuriakose (all Congress) and S Ventakesan (CPI-M).

There was a massive uproar after Rahul was stopped by the Chair from continuing with his reference to an article on former Army Chief Gen M M Naravane's unpublished memoir in his reply to the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address. He resumed his speech after authenticating the magazine article with the Chair.

While he tried to address the points without directly quoting the article, Krishna Prasad Tenneti, who was in the chair, objected and called the names of the next speakers from the Opposition side. However, the Opposition members refused to speak. Amid the chaos, the House was then adjourned till 3 pm as Opposition members protested, raising slogans and throwing papers.

Earlier, though Speaker Om Birla called a meeting of the Opposition and the treasury benchs to break the deadlock, it did not yield any result. Both sides remained firm on their stance regarding Rahul's reference to the article quoting Gen Naravane.

As soon as the House met at 3 pm, Dilip Saikia, who was in the Chair, named the eight 'unruly' members. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju then read out a resolution seeking their suspension for the remaining period of the Budget session. The resolution was passed by a voice vote.

Martial artist to be Manipur CM

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

MARTIAL artist-turned-politician **Yumnam Khemchand Singh** (62) of BJP is set to become the chief minister of Manipur. The swearing-in could take place on Wednesday.

The state's BJP MLAs, who met in New Delhi on Tuesday, elected Khemchand — a two-time MLA, former minister and former assembly speaker representing Singjamei in Imphal valley — as the BJP legislature party leader.

Khemchand's election signalled the withdrawal of President's rule that was imposed on February 13 last year for six months and later, extended by another six months. It will expire on February 13.It remains to be seen if the 10 Kuki-Zo MLAs, including seven from BJP, will participate in the government. The Kuki-Zo community has stuck to its guns on the Union Territory with separate legislature demand.

EXPRESS READ

Can't play with Indians' data, SC tells Meta

NEW DELHI: Expressing concern over data sharing by social media platforms WhatsApp and Meta, the Supreme Court came down heavily on the companies, saying, "You can't play with the right to privacy in this country" **P11**

A modern touch to Murgod's green bangles

TUSHAR A MAJUKAR @ Belagavi

MURGOD village in Belagavi's Saundatti taluk is breathing new life into its centuries-old tradition of crafting distinctive green glass bangles. The village is now on course to becoming the country's second state-of-the-art bangle manufacturing centre after Firozabad in Uttar Pradesh—and the first of its kind in the southern part of the country.

Members of the Murgod Bangle Production Foundation engaged in making bangles

Despite stiff competition from modern and fancy designs, the demand for Murgod's traditional, unbroken glass bangles remains strong. In a bid to sustain and expand this heritage craft, local youth have formed the Murgod Bangle Production Foundation and submitted a proposal for a modern manufacturing project.

Responding positively, the Karnataka cabinet has approved five acres on the outskirts of the village under a 35-year lease agreement.

Under the new project, the existing wood-fired kilns will be replaced with advanced gas-fired technology. This transition is expected to significantly improve both production speed and product quality while also making the process more efficient. P7